

FROME RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health

FOR THE YEAR 1909.

GENTLEMEN,—

I beg to submit the following Report on the Public Health of the Frome Rural District for the year ending December 31st, 1909.

I append to this Report FIVE TABULATED STATEMENTS as required by the Local Government Board, and I am sending Copies of the Report and the Tables to the Local Government Board and the Somerset County Council.

The VITAL STATISTICS of the District for this year cannot very well be compared with those of the previous 10 years, as this is only the eighth complete year in which the area and population have not been affected by the absorption into the Frome Urban District of a certain portion of the Selwood Parish.

From the Tables enclosed, the following facts appear :—

AREA OF DISTRICT—51,448 Acres.

POPULATION—11,118.

NUMBER OF INHABITED HOUSES—2,650.

AVERAGE NUMBER OF PERSONS PER HOUSE—4·2.

OCCUPATION—Agriculture and Coal Mining.

	1909.	1908.	1907.	1906.	1905.	1904.
BIRTH RATE per 1000 living...	22·7	20·5	22·5	22	22·5	20
DEATH RATE „ „ ...	11·7	10	12·1	11·5	10	11·4
ZYMOTIC RATE „ „ ...	·4	·02	·7	·7	·3	·3
INFANT MORTALITY per 1000 births...	80	80	84	72	72	63

The above Statistics are based upon the population shown in the last census, and I know of no exceptional circumstances that would materially alter the population in any part of the District.

BIRTHS.—The total number of Births is 251 : Males 127 ; Females 124 : of these 20 died under 1 year of age.

DEATHS.—The total number of Deaths registered during the year was 129. The Death Rate is 11·7 per 1000 living.

The CAUSES OF DEATH at all ages were as follows :—

Whooping Cough ...	2
Diphtheria ...	1
Diarrhoea ...	2
Enteric ...	2
Phthisis ...	9
Other Tubercular Diseases ...	3
Cancer ...	12
Bronchitis ...	15
Pneumonia...	4
Alcoholism...	1
Heart Disease ...	28
Accidents ...	3
Old Age ...	14
Premature Birth ...	5
Apoplexy ...	12
Other Causes ...	16
	<hr/> 129

The AGES at which DEATH occurred were as follows :—

Under 1 year of age ...	20
1 year and under 5 years ...	5
5 years „ 15 „ ...	3
15 „ „ 25 „ ...	3
25 „ „ 65 „ ...	33
Over 65 years ...	65
	<hr/> 129

The INFANT MORTALITY is about the average: 20 Infants having died under the age of 1 year, making the Infant Mortality Rate 80 per 1000 births. The causes of these 20 early Deaths were as follows:—

Whooping Cough ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Diarrhoea ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Bronchitis ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5
Premature Birth ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5
Tubercular Diseases ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
Other Causes ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5
								<hr/> 20 <hr/>

The INFECTIOUS DISEASES NOTIFICATION ACT has been in force in the District since 1890, and works satisfactorily, and is of great value in giving immediate information of Infectious Disease, and thus enabling steps to be taken to prevent the spread of the same, and the record of the cases serves as an index of the sanitary condition of the various localities.

During the past year 26 cases have been notified throughout the whole District as compared with 39 the previous year. They were as follows:—

Diphtheria ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	8
Erysipelas ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6
Scarlet Fever ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	11
Enteric ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
								<hr/> 26 <hr/>

None of these cases proved fatal. The cases occurred as follows:—

Diphtheria:—

2 cases at Buckland in January.
1 case at Marston in February.
1 „ Whatley in February.
1 „ Great Elm in June.
1 „ Little Keyford in October.
1 „ Foxcote in October.
1 „ Writhlington in October.

Erysipelas:—

1 case at Selwood in February.
1 „ Haydon in August.
1 „ Beckington in October.
1 „ Road in November.
1 „ Faulkland in December.
1 „ Kilmersdon in December.

Scarlet Fever:—

1 case at Murtry in January.
1 „ Buckland in January.
1 „ Mells in February.
1 „ Nunney in May.
1 „ Kilmersdon in August.
1 „ Buckland in September.
1 „ Beckington in November.
1 „ Wanstrow in November.
1 „ Haydon in November.
2 cases at Selwood in December.

Enteric:—

1 case at Vobster in July.

In every case where an Infectious Disease has been notified, I have, without delay, visited the premises and made all possible arrangements for the isolation of the case; I also forward to the occupier of the house a printed notice calling attention to the Infectious Diseases (Prevention) Act, 1890, and also a printed form of instructions for home isolation; I also send a printed notice to the Inspector, who provides disinfectants and visits the house from time to time to see that my instructions to the occupier are properly carried out. A notice is also sent, if necessary, to the Head Teacher of the local School, warning him not to admit children to the School from the infected house; by these means we endeavour to stop the spread of infection without an Isolation Hospital, and we do so with considerable success. At the termination of the illness, the Inspector fumigates and disinfects the premises.

SCHOOL CLOSING, ETC.—On June 7th the Great Elm Council School was closed for 12 days in consequence of Whooping Cough, and a fatal case of Diphtheria which occurred close to the School. On July 19th the Buckland Dinham School was closed for 12 days in consequence of Whooping Cough. In November, 8 children were excluded from Beckington School for 12 days, suffering from a Contagious Skin Disease (impetigo contagiosa) and 3 children from the same School were excluded from Nov. 1st to the Christmas holidays, suffering from Whooping Cough. On Nov. 22nd, 23 children suffering from Whooping Cough, were excluded from Kilmersdon School till the Christmas holidays, and 3 children were excluded for 5 days, suffering from impetigo contagiosa.

WATER SUPPLY.—The District throughout is exceptionally well supplied with good Water, most villages and hamlets have a good public supply. A new reservoir was put in for Wanstrow Water Supply, thereby doubling the storage capacity.

A constant lookout is kept on all Wells, and during the year I have had 15 samples of Well Water submitted to me for analysis; of these, 13 proved to be good Water, and two bad Water, and steps were taken to remedy the defects.

DRAINAGE & SEWAGE WORKS.—No new Sewage Works or Extensions have been carried out during the year.

DAIRIES AND COWSHEDS.—Constant inspections (at least twice a year) are made of all Dairies, Cowsheds, etc. The number of premises registered under the Dairies and Cowsheds Act is 223, of which 17 have been registered during the year. No legal proceedings have been necessary under the Act.

In June, my attention was called to a serious outbreak of Cow-pox, which attacked many Dairies in and around the District, and in many cases the Milkers contracted the disease. I communicated with the Local Government Board on the subject, and Dr. Reece and other experts were sent down, and I assisted them to make exhaustive enquiries into the matter. I have not yet seen any Report from them.

ISOLATION HOSPITAL.—There is none in the District. During the year negotiations were continued with the Frome Urban District Council, regarding a Joint Scheme for Isolation Hospital, but no arrangement was arrived at, meantime the Inspectors have been instructed to look out for a suitable site or sites.

Cases are isolated at their homes where possible. If home isolation is impracticable, temporary measures are adopted in the locality of the outbreak of infectious disease. Disinfectants are supplied and subsequent thorough fumigation of premises is carried out by the Inspectors of Nuisances on my instructions. There has been no epidemic during the past year.

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS.—There are 27 Workshops in the District, viz. :—19 Bakehouses, 4 Workshops, and 4 Laundries ; these have been inspected 142 times. There are 56 Outworkers engaged in making clothing ; there have been 112 inspections. No matter has arisen under the Act requiring prosecution or reference to H.M. Inspector.

PUBLIC HEALTH (TUBERCULOSIS) REGULATIONS.—Under these Regulations, I have received notifications of six cases of Pulmonary Tuberculosis amongst Poor Law patients. In each case I have visited the patient and supplied a sputum flask and given directions to the parent or guardian. I have received notice of the death of four of the above, and have had the premises disinfected.

FOODS AND DRUGS ACT.—No case has arisen under this Act.

INSPECTOR OF NUISANCES.—There are two, each with a Sub-District, each furnishes a Report. I am pleased to bear testimony to the very excellent way in which the duties of the Inspectors are performed, and the promptness with which my suggestions and orders are carried out.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES.—House-to-house Inspections are being constantly made. The dwellings of the Working Classes are, as a rule, in good sanitary condition, and where defects have been pointed out, the owners have remedied the same without legal proceedings.

In conclusion, I beg to thank the Council and their Officers for the invariable courtesy and support I have received from them in my work for the Public Health.

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

A. W. DALBY,

Medical Officer of Health.

FROME, *January 31st*, 1910.

With Compliments
FROM

Rural District Council.

Annual Report

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

FOR THE YEAR 1909.

January 31st, 1910.

FROM :

H. DYKE, PRINTER, CATHERINE STREET.

The Librarian

British Medical Assoc.

429 Strand

London

W.C.

